

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification beginning at page 7, line 20 as follows:

Adverting to Fig. 2, Ta deposition is then implemented, as by ISD, to sequentially form a graded ~~titanium~~ tantalum nitride layer 20 on surface region 19 and a layer α -Ta 21 on graded ~~titanium~~ tantalum nitride layer 20. A seedlayer 22 can then be deposited followed by electrodeposition or electroless deposition of Cu forming an overburden. CMP is then conducted and a capping layer 24, such as silicon nitride or silicon carbide, is deposited to complete the interconnect structure depicted in Fig. 2 comprising Cu line 23A in communication with Cu via 23B which is in electrical contact with underlying metal feature 11.